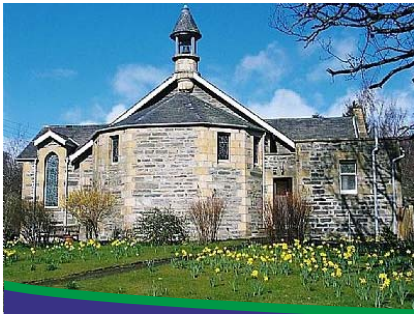


NEWSLETTER



Church of Scotland
Kingussie Linked with
Laggan and Newtonmore

www.kingussielaggannewtonmorechurch.com

AUGUST 2023

The General Assembly 2023

Rev Christine Ritchie reports...

First and foremost, I would like to thank the Presbytery of Abernethy for giving me the opportunity to attend the General Assembly this year. I have always enjoyed attending these, but this was by far the best Assembly I have attended. Throughout the entire Assembly, there was a pastoral and spiritual atmosphere due to the way in which the Moderator chaired and conducted sessions.

Worship at the start of each day was meaningful, interesting and spiritual, setting everyone up for the day ahead and the business on at least two continued until 6-45p.m. At the beginning of each we were invited to take time to breathe in and breathe out as well as sing a short song. When there was disagreement, there was mutual respect as all listened. The subject of assisted dying where there were different views was handled with sensitivity and great care and at the close of this particular section of the session, the Moderator asked us to take a quiet moment and breathe in and out and to sing an appropriate short hymn before moving on to the next subject.

On the Sunday instead of going to St Giles, I attended the service in St George's and St Andrew's Church of Scotland in George Street where there was a warm welcome and a peaceful and relaxed spiritual presence. Their locum the Right Rev. Angus Morrison took the service which was uplifting, enlightening, spiritual and with a sense of humour and I left feeling light, something I have found greatly lacking over a period of time when I have sat in the 'pew' of a Sunday!

The new Presbytery of Cleir Eilean I, Highlands and Hebrides was given the go ahead and this means we will be part of that Presbytery from January 2024 when Abernethy will cease to exist. Presbytery Plans were a hot topic with a great number of commissioners complaining about the hurt that these had caused. The convener of that particular committee kept repeating that 30 Presbytery Plans had been accepted and that Presbyteries just had to get on with the job and get them accepted among themselves before being submitted for final approval. When it came to the Assembly to accept the report and in particular that 'The Assembly welcome the progress of Presbytery Plans' a counter motion was put forward and the electronic vote produced an extremely close result. I feel that

this showed that many congregations were extremely frustrated and hurt and had continuing problems in having their Plans accepted. This very much highlighted the fact that we in Abernethy Presbytery are not alone in this matter and of course, as long as our Presbytery plan is not accepted, we cannot get permission to call a minister.

One knock on effect from the Assembly is the raising of the Pulpit Supply fee from £60 to £100 with the sum for a second service increased from £30 to £50. This will affect our costs going forward.

I attended the Guild 'Big Sing' on the Tuesday night. It was an excellent night with good hymns which related to the talks given by speakers on six Guild Projects. We learned a great deal about them and realised the amount of good work done through Guild Projects.

I could give a lot more detail regarding all the different sessions, but this Newsletter would not have enough space!

New Website

There is now a new website for the joint congregations. It is kingussielaggannewtonmorechurch.com and it has been developed thanks to Helen Peebles with some assistance from Tom Bowker. The existing one for Laggan and Newtonmore will remain in the short term.

Newsletter By E-mail

If you would prefer to get your Newsletter (and any other communications) by e-mail please contact your Session Clerk – Alison Armstrong or Sandy Peebles with your e-mail address. This would be more eco-friendly and save delivery time.

FOLLOW THE NEWS

If you are unable to attend church and have computer access, you can see all the news and the sermons on

www.kingussielaggannewtonmorechurch.com





Abernethy Presbytery

At the time of writing this, we are still without an agreed Presbytery Plan and the whole process is continuing to be extremely frustrating for both ourselves and the other churches in the Presbytery awaiting confirmation of their future. The whole process has just dragged on and this is certainly proving a challenge for the congregations who are not even able to plan to try to get a minister. This puts pressure on the ministers we have and the elders who are prepared to take services.

In spite of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in May 2023 approving the formation of the new Highlands and Hebrides Presbytery from 1st January 2024, there has been no further word as to how this will work when the nine current presbyteries amalgamate but the position of Presbytery Clerk has now been advertised and financial information is being ingathered.

Rev Graham Atkinson has agreed to remain as Moderator until the end of the year when Abernethy Presbytery will cease.

A church service was held at the end of June to acknowledge the uniting of Inverallan Church in Grantown with Dulnain Bridge and while Dulnain Bridge Church has been sold to be a house, local church services are continuing in the village hall.

Badenoch Chorale

The Chorale has performed in two concerts this year in Ness Bank Church in Inverness and in Bellie Church in Fochabers. Both concerts were well supported. Arrangements for further concerts are under discussion and will be finalised after the summer holidays but there will be the annual coffee morning concert in St Bride's at the beginning of October. Then it will be Christmas again!! What a thought!

Property Convener

Unfortunately, George Alder has had to relinquish the position of Property Convener due to health issues but will remain on the committee. A new convener has still to be appointed. Our thanks are due to George for all he has done during the period in which he has served Laggan and Newtonmore as Convener.

Donation

We are very grateful to Ardverikie Estate for their donation of £534 to Laggan Church following the opening of Ardverikie and Aberarder Gardens under the Scotland Gardens Scheme in June 2023.

Church Services

We are very grateful to our Interim Moderator Rev Christine Ritchie for her assistance with church services. Christine also

has commitments with Dulnain Bridge which is now united with Inverallan Church in Grantown, but volunteered to take additional services in the July to October period as well as monthly joint services in our churches. This takes some welcome pressure off the worship groups. Ian Hall is now the Interim Moderator for Grantown and Dulnain Bridge linked with Cromdale and is not as available as previously. We are pleased that Mary Ellen will be back taking some of our services in the coming weeks and for the support given to us by Alison Bardgett on 3rd September for a joint Laggan and Newtonmore service in Laggan and Rev Michael Mair who will be back with us in Kingussie Church for the joint service on 29th October. Thanks to all the others who play their part in our services and give support to our congregations.

Kingussie News

Concerts

The much-anticipated concert by Italian organist Giorgio Revelli took place on 8th June. An audience of over 70 enjoyed the concert repertoire. The organ was in fine tune having been serviced and retuned prior to the concert. Giorgi who has played many organs in Europe and elsewhere enjoyed playing the organ and hopes to return at some point in the future.

The Strathfest Summer concert was held in the church on 25th June when talented young musicians and more experienced performers from Badenoch and Strathspey entertained on a wet Sunday afternoon. Their performance was enjoyed by all who listened to their music. Further events are in the planning stage and further information will be provided in due course.

Warm Spaces

Warm spaces continue, used by the Shinty Memories Group, local walkers, members of the community, church members and visitors to the area. More visitors from abroad are popping in and have been asking about ancestors. Morag Barr and Mary Mackenzie have been assisting with enquiries. Some Duke of Gordon guests have also been popping in for local company and some have promised to return. Our own church members come in to enjoy fellowship so if you have not yet come in to say hello, please do!

Monday Lunch

This has been discontinued due to the reduction in visitor and helper numbers some of whom are now going to Warm Spaces on a Thursday morning. Thanks are due to Sally Freshwater who has been bringing in delicious soup and pudding from Loch Insh for several years.



Fresh expressions

Tom Bowker is going to Lewis to see a successful community project In Stornoway set up by Martin's Memorial Church. The project called THE SHED is a hub started predominately for youth work but now includes family support and drug rehabilitation work. This is an example of a church working in the community and Tom is keen to see what can be learned from it that might be appropriate in Badenoch and Strathspey.

Tom is also hoping to arrange a Live Nativity at Alltnacriche on Saturday 16th December when all the congregations in Badenoch would be invited to participate. This is very much in the planning stage and further details will be available later once Tom has had a conversation with all interested parties.

Laggan Church

A first meeting was held in Laggan Church following the joint service on Sunday 23rd July as we now expecting to shortly receive confirmation that the Church of Scotland will close the church for worship at the end of 2024. It is to be hoped that in the intervening period a case can be made to retain the Laggan Church building for the community and there will be forthcoming conversations between the General Trustees, the Laggan and Newtonmore Kirk Session and the community in Laggan. The Church of Scotland has condemned the building on the grounds that it does not have water and toilet facilities in spite of the fact that congregations have managed adequately over many years. Closing it achieves nothing for the Church of Scotland and unfortunately Laggan Church is not the only church in this position. The grounds around the church are owned by Highland Council who maintain the cemetery.

The Manse

We are hopeful that the outstanding work required to make the manse wind and watertight for next winter, will commence in August. A price for this work has already been accepted. Once this work is complete, we will be obtaining advice from an architect regarding the building and the site as to the best way forward. The Church of Scotland requires a certain standard of manse for us to be able to seek a new minister and due to updated environmental considerations, our current manse may require a lot of work to bring it up to scratch and this could be a financial challenge, so we need to know what options we have at our disposal.

Diary Dates

Joint Services at 10-30a.m.

30 th July	Laggan picnic at Ardverikie
5 th August	Newtonmore Highland Games <i>Church stall - help required</i>
13 th August	Stated Annual Meeting for Kingussie
10 th September	Stated Annual Meeting for Laggan and Newtonmore (Service now at 10.30am followed by soup and pudding).
22 nd October	Joint Communion Service in Laggan Church 10.30am

A Good News Story

Both Laggan and Newtonmore congregations have heard Angus Armstrong speak of the work of Christian Engineers in Development in which he plays a part. Earlier this year Angus was invited to speak to Probus which has number from our congregations as members, and this is the good which came out of his talk.

“ Following the Probus meeting in Aviemore earlier in the year, one of your members has been in touch to say that their organisation has made a very substantial donation to the work of CED. I understand that the money has been allocated to more than one project, but it has provided the final balance sufficient for one of our current projects to be able to proceed to full construction. The project is providing the following benefits

A borehole with a solar powered pump charging an elevated header tank. This then runs out to 30 tap points plus 30 latrine blocks benefitting 6,000 in all, at an all-in project cost of £110,000 – less than £20 per head.”

This just shows that you never know who is in your audience and the effect a talk may have! This was certainly a Good News story and Angus was obviously delighted!





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